

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 ACDA-12 /085 W
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R 141350Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8488
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 3989

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EC
SUBJECT: GENERAL DURAN PROMISES TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE

1. ARMY COMMANDER AND SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT MEMBER
GENERAL GUILLERMO DURAN ARCENTALES, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH A
REPORTER OF QUITO'S EL COMERCIO, COMMENTED ON MAY 12 THAT
MILITARY DICTATORSHIP CANNOT BE A PERMANENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT
AND THAT THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY SINCERE
IN ITS INTENTIONS TO RETURN ECUADOR TO CIVILIAN RULE. DURAN
DEFENDED THE PROCEDURE BY WHICH THE GOE IS RETURNING TO
CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT AND INSISTED THAT DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT
IS ECUADOR'S NATURAL STATE.

2. DURAN ADDED THAT THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE THREE MEMBERS
OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN
EXCELLENT, DESPITE OCCASIONAL DIFFERENCES IN POINTS OF VIEW.
FINALLY, DURAN INDICATED THAT HE INTENDED TO RETIRE AFTER THE
MILITARY HAS COMPLETED THE RETURN TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. COMMENT: THE COMMENTS BY DURAN IN AND OF THEMSELVES
ARE NOT SIGNIFICANT SINCE THEY MERELY ECHO SENTIMENTS
EXPRESSED EARLY AND OFTEN BY ADMIRAL POVEDA AND SECRETARY
GENERAL OF ADMINISTRATION ADMIRAL VICTOR HUGO GARCES.
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THEY ARE SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT
DURAN HIMSELF HAS COMMENTED AT SUCH LENGTH IN PUBLIC THAT
THE MILITARY IS HONOR BOUND TO RETURN ECUADOR TO CIVILIAN
RULE UNDER THE TERMS OF THE CURRENTLY UNDER WAY RETORNO
PROMISE.

4. DURAN'S COMMENTS APPEAR TO SIGNAL THE END OF ANY

RESIDUAL HOPES HE MIGHT HAVE HAD TO BECOME CHIEF OF STATE
AND SHOULD HELP TO FURTHER REASSURE SKEPTICS ABOUT THE
BONA FIDE INTENTIONS OF THE MILITARY TO SURRENDER POWER.
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Message Attributes

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